

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

The broadcast flag will obviously interfere with legitimate copying and stifle new innovations that could make multimedia more valuable and easier to use.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

Of course it would, the only purpose for the flag is to limit copying. Fair use should trump copyright interests, people should not be assumed guilty until assumed innocent, if there is a fair use action, it must be protected. Adding restrictions and complications prevents only legitimate users from exercising fair use.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

The broadcast flag would result in incompatibilities. If manufacturers allow compatibility, it can be easily argued that the broadcast flag is pointless but it is more important to recognize that with the broadcast flag consumer rights and fair use is being trampled.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

Whether it is the intent or not, limitations on how digital media can be accessed and used will necessarily limit innovations that can be developed in the future. Digital media presents such a promising area for innovation and growth, America is in a position to lead the world in new access technologies, new uses for digital media, etc.

I work in research and development. The military is increasingly moving toward products and tools already developed in the commercial sector, especially in the area of networking. If digital media is handicapped (as with the broadcast flag), innovation will drop and the cost to the United States Government will rise because the military will not be able to take advantage of commercial sector products in this area.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

Artificial restrictions always mean more work, probably there will need to be some kind of "compliance policing" that each company will need to undergo before they can deploy new products and that cost will be passed to consumers.

In addition, this artificial restriction will go ahead of the features and enhancements that companies can put into their products between releases.

The additional cost of building the broadcast flag aware product as well as the cost of certification will raise the barrier to entry for small innovative start-up companies, discouraging companies from moving in this direction with new products.